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VOL. III. No. 12.] GREENSBORO, N. C., FOR THE WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1858. [WHOLE No. 114.

A Prize Story written expressly for the "Times."
THE STRAY WAIF.
BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

CHAPTER X.
"Bring me into my trial when you will. I will be there. Where should he die? Can I make men live whether they will or no?"
Shakespeare.
ITH dauntless vigilance, Edith, Leonore had broken down, and thrust aside, all obstacles, and now with a written order for admittance to the cell of the accused, signed by the County Magistrate, she stood, waiting for the jailer to select, from the ponderous bunch of keys at his belt, the one which opened the door of De Lancia's prison.
Along the dismal passage to the iron-door, they went—the man stern in the familiarity which scenes give;—the woman pale and fearful, yet calm outwardly as the granite blocks about them. Slowly and gratefully the great door swung open—she went in, and it was closed and locked behind her. One hour's time was granted her to remain with the prisoner—at the end of that period, she must go forth again, and leave him to solitude.
Edith stepped softly along the moist stone floor of the cell, and when her eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, she was enabled to perceive the form of the accused, lying upon the straw bed in a quiet sleep.
The beautiful woman, looking so strangely out of place there in that dismal prison, stole noiselessly upon the bed, and looked almost reverently upon the face of the sleeper. Very pale and sad was that face, but there was no consciousness of guilt about the calm, firm lips, or upon the broad white expanse of the thoughtful brow. It was a face upon which suffering had ploughed many lines, but guilt had left never a footprint there!
He had evidently fallen asleep while reading, for his hand rested upon an open Bible, with the fingers indicating the last three verses of the 27th Psalm. The woman stooped over him, and read the words: "Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies, for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty."
"I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."
"Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thee. Wait, I say, on the Lord."
The visitor laid down the book, and smoothed out the hard pillow upon which his head rested. The movement disturbed him; he turned upon his side and faintly murmured—"Edith went away—all are gone!"
She leaned over him, and a warm tear which would not be restrained, fell upon his brow. He started up, and before she could move from her position at his side, he saw her face.
"Great Heaven! Edith Tarleton! Am I dreaming?"
"It is no dream, Hamilton! In a moment he held her closely in his arms, his eyes looking down into hers, as if to read the very secrets of her soul.
"Edith! Edith! it is enough—I can die willingly, now that I have read truth in thy face! Night and day my prayer has been—'Lord restore her to me before I die!' Edith, I wanted to see you, once more, to tell you the innocence of my heart of this terrible crime! You believe me, Edith?"
"I believe you."
"It is enough! And now let me rest!"—he laid his head wearily upon her shoulder—"I feel that I have a right to do this, Edith! The heart that throbs beneath thy breast has never been given to another!"
She answered him slowly and solemnly, "Never! even in thought!"
"And now, Edith, tell me all! Why you left my love, and made me wretched? Keep nothing back! I have longed for this hour, through every dismal moment since that night of bereavement."
Sitting there in the prison gloom, she told him all that had transpired in her life since she had fled from Wellspring up to that very night. She told him of the cruel letter written by his father—of her struggles with love—of her final determination to make herself his sacrifice. Of her weary way to New York, where she arrived destitute of money, and knowing no one in the whole of that great city. Of the miserable pittance which she had obtained by needlework, of the insults she had received; of her singing to herself a plaintive dirge one morning, while sitting at her garret window—the set of her life which had brought her both wealth and fame. Mons. St. Leger, the New Orleans opera manager, was passing by in the street at the time, her voice had attracted him, he had called upon her, heard her sing, and immediately made her an offer to accompany him to New Orleans. She accepted, and for more than a year she studied her art. Then, she made her debut before the public, was successful, and had acquired a small fortune. She told all this to Hamilton very briefly,

with the murder of your brother Eugene De Lancia, on the 10th day of April last, what have you to say in answer to this charge?"
"Not guilty!" came from the lips of the accused, clear and firm, and the echo rang round the great room like the clang of a silver bell.
In a brief, pointed and eloquent manner the Judge charged the Jury, and the twelve men, upon whose decision rested the fate of a human being, retired for consultation. They were absent some fifteen or twenty minutes, and then they returned slowly and solemnly, and sat down silently in their places.
"Gentlemen of the Jury," said the Judge, "have you agreed upon a verdict?"
The twelve men bowed silently.
"The twelve men bowed silently?"
"Our Foreman shall speak for us!"
The Foreman arose, and the Chief Justice put the question—
"Do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty?"
"GUILTY!"
Not a muscle of De Lancia's face moved, not a nerve quivered, but firm and immovable as a pillar of granite he sat upon his chair. Throughout the reading of the terrible sentence of death by the hands of a public executioner, he maintained the same unbroken composure, and those who saw him called him hardened and stubborn.
Edith, sustained by his calmness, controlled herself till the dreadful words—
"There to be hanged by the neck until you are dead!" fell upon her ear, and she could hear no more, but fell senseless to the floor! Hamilton sprang forward to raise her up, but he was pushed back by the officers of the law, and forbidden to touch an innocent woman with hands accursed by a brother's blood!
Slowly and sorrowfully, he cast a last tender, yearning look at the insensible form, and then turning away, he suffered the iron of the convict to be put upon his wrists, without resistance, and was borne by the sheriff back to the prison, from whence he was to emerge only to a shameful death upon the scaffold!
CHAPTER XII.
"Justice is stern, and death inflexible!"
DITH awoke from her swoon to a sense of her miserable condition. "My God! my God! what shall I do?" was her constant cry.
She made her way to the prison, and after much entreaty, succeeded in prevailing on the jailer to admit her to the room of the condemned for the little space of five minutes. Their meeting cannot be described—such moments, we hope, come seldom in the life-time of any human being.
"Edith," he said, when the first wild outburst of grief had past, "I pray, you to be calm! God will be with you, if you ask His presence, and He has promised not to break the bruised reed!"
"Don't talk to me thus, Hamilton! You shall not die! I will go to the Governor—I will implore him on my knees to spare your life—I will never leave him till he grants mercy! He cannot be so hard and cruel—he shall listen to me—and if he refuses, I will die at his feet! It cannot must not be! Oh God help me!" She sprang up and paced the narrow limits of the cell like a maniac—her eyes kindled to an unearthly brightness, and her cheeks a burning crimson of frenzy. Hamilton essayed to draw her back with his mangled hands, but he fell upon his side in the useless effort. She flew to his side, and pressed him passionately in her arms.
"Adieu! I go to the Governor. When I return, I will bring the pardon! Adieu!"
Before he could restrain her, she had flown; and the prisoner sank back in his chair, and cried in the bitterness of his soul—"My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me!"
Although it was late at night, before she could make arrangements for her journey to Boston, still Edith set out, regardless of the time and the rainy weather; what were these trifling annoyances to a soul in such agony as hers? She traveled in a private carriage, for railways were not so numerous then as now, and consequently her progress was so slow that she did not reach Boston until evening of the next day. Late as it was, she was not to be deterred, and seeking out the Governor's residence, she rapped at the door. A sleepy servant answered her summons, and informed her that the Governor had retired, much fatigued with important State duties which had that day claimed his attention.
"But I must see him! It matters not if he is fatigued—fatigue is nothing—I come on an errand of vital importance! Go up and tell your master that a woman wishes to speak to him on an affair of life and death!"
The earnestness of her manner impressed the man forcibly, and he went up stairs to the Governor's chamber. After being absent a brief time, he returned, and invited the visitor into a side parlor, where he said his master would soon join her.
Edith paced the floor for the space of five minutes, in agonizing suspense. At length, the door of the room opened, and a gentleman came in. He was middle-aged, with gray hair upon his head, and deep furrows upon his forehead, but he

was erect as the forest pine. His bearing was dignified, but courteous, and his kindly greeting inspired new hope in Edith's breast.
"Governor M—?"
"The same; madam. My servant tells me you have a message for me?"
"Yes, sir; I come upon a message of life and death—I have come to ask you to spare the life of Hamilton De Lancia!"
The Governor's brow clouded. "The young man who was convicted, a day since at Rockport, of the murder of his brother?"
"Yes, sir; oh! spare him from this terrible fate! But spare his life, and I will bless you forever!"
"He was proven guilty to the minds of the jurors, and the laws of our land punish murder with death! Why do you ask for his life?"
"Because he is not guilty! Oh heavens! that any one can believe him capable of such a crime!"
The Governor looked at her with sympathy—I do not doubt but you believe in his innocence, but others think differently. There can be no shadow between an impartial mind and his guilt!"
"Then you will not save him?" She stood up before him, white as a marble statue.
"I would, but cannot!" he replied, deeply moved by her wild distress.
"Cannot? oh, why? oh, sir; do not refuse me! My life shall be yours—I will be your slave as long as I live, if you will but spare him!"
"The good of my country requires the death of Hamilton De Lancia, and I hold that country's welfare paramount to all other feelings, either public or private. I sorrow to say it, madam, but this man must die!"
She flung herself at his feet, and in all her regal beauty, she implored the man of power to hear her. Her veil had fallen from, and her rich dark hair released from its fastenings, rolled down to her waist, a mass of burnished amber. A more touching picture than all that distressed goodness can hardly be conceived. Perhaps the Governor thought thus, for he offered his hand to raise her up, but she repulsed him.
"No, no; I will live here until you will relent! As you hope for mercy from the great and terrible God of Heaven, show mercy to man! God who sees not as man sees, knows that he is innocent! How dare you take the blood of a fellow man upon your soul?"
"My child," said the Governor pityingly—"believing as I do in the culpability of this man, I should sin against my own conscience in granting him a pardon, and if I mistake justice I wrong the innocent. I trust that my Father in Heaven will forgive me! The oath of my office demands that I shall consider the good of my State, in preference to every other consideration, and though I may have feelings as acute as those of other people, I must suppress all impulse before the stern face of Justice!"
"Oh Heaven! will nothing melt you to mercy? What is all this? Suddenly she arose and stood up proudly before him—"Sir, have you children?"
"Two, a son and daughter."
"If that cherished son should ever stand in the same awful situation as Hamilton De Lancia to-day occupies—would you then listen to the voice of Justice, instead of Love?"
The face of the stern old man grew pale, but he replied firmly—
"Were this man, my own son, I should still pray to God for strength to yield him willingly up to the requirements of the Law!"
At this moment, the door swung open, and a young girl came hastily into the room. She was a beautiful blonde, with deep blue eyes, and soft bright hair. Her cheeks showed that she had overheard a part, if not the whole, of the previous conversation.
"Father," she said, going up to the old man, and laying her arm about his neck, "Is this De Lancia's crime so very great that he merits no mercy?"
"It is the highest crime, my daughter, of which a man can be guilty!"
"He is not guilty! I tell you he is innocent of this thing as Heaven's own angels!" Edith held the girl firmly by the shoulders as she spoke, and her eyes seemed to burn the conviction of her truth into the soul of the Governor's daughter.
"Is he your brother?" the girl asked kindly.
A flush swept over Edith's forehead—"He is my betrothed husband!"
The blue eyes of the young girl grew sad—"Father, cannot you save him?"
"It is useless, Agnes; he is guilty!"
"But he is young and impulsive, let that plead for him! He may not be all evil!"
"Evil? he is good and pure! his heart is more I ask—save him!"
"Madam, it is vain! Were all the powers of earth to rise up and plead for him, it would not move me one iota from my sense of right! Justice must take its course!"
"Oh God!" burst from the lips of the wretched Edith; and more dead than alive, she staggered from the house.
TO BE CONTINUED.

ble our traveller turned away and wandered in the starlight down the banks of the sacred river, till the cries of the idolaters died in the distance, and perfect calm succeeded. "Tush! a sweet familiar melody drifts o'er, the silence, a hymn he has heard at home. Attracted by the sound he hastens toward a light that glimmers thro' the leaves and discovers a low cottage. Upon entering he discovers the family of a native missionary, who were converted to Christianity."
The Peace of Sweet Sounds! Where is not their might acknowledged? They ring not alone in the "dim and mighty ministers of old time" but through all of Nature's realm, in the winds that stir the grass and gleaming corn, that linger round the violet and "about the sunset rose tree deep in June;" in the birds, those sweet natural musicians that "sing the song which Nature taught," in the pattering rain and dashing waterfall we trace the workings of the same grand spirit of Harmony. But we fancy by this time our Editors have grown any thing but harmonious over our dull pages, and beside silver Tongue in the corner says it is time to close, so with the half unsaid we leave our chapter of spiritual Songs and Hymns.
WRITTEN FOR THE TIMES.
Nellie.
BY ROLLIN.
Soft was her golden hair,
Fragile her form and fair,
Winning her smile as an angel's sweet tone;
Dark was her love-lit eye,
And her soul's melody,
Gushed from a bosom to sorrow unknown.
Long days have come and fled,
Since o'er her dying bed,
Fondly we bent for affection's last kiss—
"Weep not," she cried, "for me!"—
Jesus I come to thee
And angel wings bore her to mansions of bliss.
Low in my sunny glade
Nellie the fair is laid,
Sweetly she sleeps 'neath thy branches old yew;
And the flowers on her lowly bed,
Wet with the tears we shed,
Wave in their beauty o'er Nellie the true.
Female Heroism.
We wish that Dr. Doran, or some other equally patient explorer of the records of the past, would give in a single volume a recital of the exploits of those ladies who, rising above the timidity attributed to the sex, have, impelled by the religious or patriotic motives, emulated the deeds of the most renowned warriors of the field. The record would be indeed a brilliant one. We should behold the wives and maidens of the ancient Helvetia, the worthy successors of the modern Swiss, rolling back the veteran mail-clad warriors of Rome in disastrous defeat; we should see matrons of Britain hurling defiance at Cæsar's legions, and towering above the tide of battle. Boadicea, the warrior-queen of the Iceni. Coming down to later times, the maid of Orleans would rivet our attention—that wonderful peasant girl of Domremy, who commanded armies, attacked fortresses, hurled back the tide of invasion, and perished at last, not fairly overcome, but the victim of disgraceful treason.
Joan of Arc seems to have transmitted her heroic spirit to many of her countrywomen. In the campaign of '93, the Sam- bre and Meuse, Dumourier had for his aid-de-camps two of the loveliest young ladies in all France. Of dazzling beauty, their figures showed to advantage in their fine cavalry uniforms, and they inspired as much respect and enthusiasm by their valor, as they won admiration by their charms. They rode into the hottest of the battle, carrying the orders of the General, cheering on the charge, and eliding the retreat. An eye-witness of their exploits tells how he saw these girls, by their remonstrances, more than once check the flight of the panic-stricken troops. "Whither are you going, soldiers?" they cried, in their slender voices. "The enemies are not in that direction. Follow us!" and waving their gleaming swords, they would lead in the path of danger and glory. In almost every stricken field of modern times where the French colors have waved, we are told that women have been found where the dead lay thickest, sleeping beside the lovers, brothers and husbands they refused to forsake in the hour of deadliest peril.
Turn to Spain, that land of romance, where the sunlight of chivalry lingered latest, and there you will find splendid examples of female heroism, gliding the de- tails of that unhappy country, like flowers brightening a ruined wall. At the sieges of Saragossa, Valencia, Girona and Tortosa, the women enrolled themselves in battalions, and fought with unexampled bravery beside the men. Conspicuous in the ele- gions array the figure of the maid of Saragossa rises to our vision, that lovely hero- ine immortalized by Byron's muse and Wilkie's pencil—she who took her place in the battery, where her lover was slain, and with her own fair hands pointed the gun and applied the watch, when stern veterans fell back from the storm of shot and shell that poured upon them. The Greek and Hungarian revolutions were il- luminated by such valiant examples of fe- male heroism. Our own revolutionary an- nals are not without numerous instances of female courage displayed in the hottest of causes. It would require a large volume to record in the briefest manner the ser- vices that women have rendered in the hour of peril.

